

# Mme. Storch—Vampire and German Spy



Mme. Nezie Storch, from a Photograph Taken in Toledo, Spain

## (Continued from Last Sunday) CHAPTER VI.

THE escape of Mme. Storch from Petrograd early in 1915, when the treason of her victim, Colonel Miasoyedoff, was discovered, as related last week, was one of the most dramatic episodes in the amazing career of this fragile young Turkish beauty whose life was dedicated to the sinister purposes of Berlin.

For many months she had intrigued for Germany in the gay life of the Russian capital, bending officers of the army and ministers of state to her wicked will. From the boudoir of the wife of the Minister of War she had purloined the secrets of army organizations and campaign plans which, finding their way to headquarters of General Hindenburg, had made it possible for the Prussian armies to find the weak spots in the Russian advance. The Minister of War was put in chains for life; Colonel Miasoyedoff was hanged and lesser officers who had succumbed to the wiles of Mme. Storch were executed, as has been previously told.

Mme. Storch herself might have been caught and her career ended there and then if she had not been prematurely warned that her activities as a spy were being disclosed.

Among those who had traded their loyalty to Czar and country for the smiles of the charming young woman who was so close a friend of the powerful Mme. Soukhomlinoff, wife of the Minister of War, was a gallant general on whose breast shone the medals which marked him as a veteran of the war with Japan. This general held a post under the General Staff. He was in close touch with those who had charge of the purchase of war supplies and their transportation. He was in a position to send many car loads of ammunition which was badly needed at the west front into the interior of the country, or to the Caucasus, where it could not be used against the Germans.

Mme. Storch soon discovered his susceptibility to the wiles of engaging young women, and marked him as one of her own.

The general was flattered, delighted—captivated. The pretty Mme. Nezie constantly demanded souvenirs of his affection for her. Such souvenirs in Petrograd those days were customarily jewels. The general was dependent almost wholly upon his salary. He was sadly troubled for the money with which to gratify the expensive whims of his fair charmer.

Mme. Storch reproached her admirer for his troubles. There were ways, she said, that he could follow toward fortunes large enough to satisfy even her. Then it was that the Russian officer learned that he could make Germany pay him well for every train load of ammunition that was "misdirected"—that is, shipped "by mis-

take" to the interior of Russia instead of to the front, where men were dying by thousands for the lack of it.

When the investigation into the reasons for the Russian defeat began, and the trail led to Colonel Miasoyedoff and the Minister of War, this general was trapped. A company of gendarmes was sent to arrest him. They found him in the boudoir of his enchantress. He wept as they dragged him away from the young woman who had lured him into treachery.

A court martial was waiting. He was never heard of again. It is believed he confessed before they shot him. The gendarme hurried back to the house of Mme. Storch with orders to arrest her, too—but Mme. Nezie had gone. It was never learned how she got across the border—who forged her passports. But some one who was powerful passed her out of Russia, and soon she was at Zurich, in Switzerland, the Mecca of all spies in Europe.

Within a few weeks after her arrival at Zurich, where she was joined by the Count de Beville, Mme. Storch appeared in London, where she presented herself as Mme. Hesqueth. She wore only black, and explained that she was the widow of a young captain who had been with his regiment in India when war was declared, and who had been killed while serving with the first expedition into the Asiatic provinces of Turkey. There were so many young widows in London then that few ever questioned the merits of their pretensions.

London at that time was the seat of operations for many of Germany's most trusted and valued spies. Hans Lodi, believed to be the most accomplished and successful of all the spies sent into England and France by Germany during the days immediately preceding the war, had organized a vast system, with headquarters in London, and with agents reaching into almost every field of war activity. Lodi himself had boldly donned the uniform of an officer of Territorials, and frequented army clubs and the barracks of divisions in training.

From Lodi Mme. Storch received her orders upon her arrival in London. She was told to copy the methods of Mme. Bertha Trost, the "Little Old Lady of Bond Street," who was then gathering the most valuable information for the German War Office.

Mme. Trost was proprietress of a beauty shop in Bond street. She had been a familiar figure along this busy street of shops for many years. Every morning she took long walks with two great dogs. Her shop was one of the most popular of its kind. It was especially noted for the prettiness of the young women who served the shop patrons, and among the latter there were many young officers of London regiments who enjoyed being manieured by Mme. Bertha's pretty attendants.

When war days arrived Mme. Bertha exhibited a great solicitude for the young officers who had been her patrons. She invited them to little parties at her house in Queen's Gardens—"farewell parties," she called them, at which the officers might be as merry as they wished while they awaited their orders for the front. At these parties the pretty girls from Mme. Bertha's shop helped entertain the young soldiers.

There was plenty of wine, of course. When Mme. Bertha's guests had lost their discretion

READERS of this page are already familiar with the history of the career of Mme. Nezie Storch, one of the most valued and highly paid spies in the German Secret Service, as it has been told from week to week. After six years of successful activity in all the great capitals of Europe, Mme. Storch was trapped recently in the Biltmore Hotel, in New York City, by agents of the United States Department of Justice.

Her childhood experiences in the harem, her years of gay life among the profligates of the most licentious society in Europe and her establishment in Paris by the German Foreign Office in an expensive setting of servants, equipages and admirers were narrated in previous chapters. Her enlistment of the pretty dancer, Mlle. Mata-Hari, as a spy and the latter's execution by a firing squad; the debauchery of Mlle. Susy Depsy and this young woman's tragic fate as a spy; her intrigues with Raisuli, the Moroccan bandit, and the tragic deaths of two of Spain's proudest noblemen, who had become her lovers and dupes, her sinister activities in Petrograd, were also related, and a further chapter is added to-day

in the wine goblets the pretty girls always quizzed them earnestly about their regiments—when they were going to the war zone? how many of them were going? were there any "secrets" they could tell? and how many big guns was England making? etc. Under the spell of wine and sparkling eyes Mme. Trost's guests told many things about England's war preparations that Berlin was glad to know. It was many months before Mme. Trost was unmasked. She was executed and half a score of her pretty girls were sent to cells for the duration of the war.

It was from one of these girls that the authorities learned that Hans Lodi, the master spy, was in England masquerading in an officer's uniform. He was entertaining a company of army officers in a London theatre when a British major who sat in the stalls recognized him from the description of him given the War Office by the young woman who had been Mme. Trost's shop girl. The major stepped up to the disguised spy and touched him on the shoulder. When Lodi looked up into the officer's face he realized his fate had fallen upon him. He confessed his identity and his mission in England, but he refused to betray his assistants—among whom was Mme. Storch.

Mme. Storch, in copying the methods of Mme. Trost, opened a shop where she might receive donations of equipment, such as handkerchiefs, tobacco cases, toilet kits for service bags, sweaters, etc., for departing soldiers.

In this enterprise many prominent London women came to the assistance of the wistful looking young widow. Two or three titles were added to her list of patronesses by the nobility. A distinguished army officer contributed the support of his name. The little reception rooms where "Mme. Hesqueth" met and chatted with all who wished to drop in and leave a donation for the comfort of the soldiers about to go to the front became immensely popular.

Being the widow of an officer, as Mme. Hesqueth explained, she was especially attracted to those who were engaged in the King's service—officers of the new regiments and officers attached to the War Department staff duties. She was much interested, of course, in the plans for the great offensive which was to drive the Germans back to the Rhine or the mysterious preparations for an extension of the transport service and the expansion of the general campaign to the colonies, Egypt and Palestine.

The young military men were vastly interested in these plans themselves, and quite often they talked of them more than they should, but with a feeling that surely there could be no harm in such discussions with the patriotic widow of an officer who had given his life to the King.

At this time England's energies were being most exerted in the great arsenals at Portsmouth, in the Orkneys and the Shetlands, where new big guns were being assembled and loaded aboard ships for France, and at the munitions plants at Beardmore's and at Lerwick. A pretty good estimate of the British strength in artillery, both actual and prospective, could be gathered from the little confidences Mme. Storch as Mme. Hesqueth, the widow, lured from ordnance officers and officers from the battleships who were fond of straying into her reception rooms, ostensibly to compliment her upon the good work she was doing, but really to flirt with her.

Germany obtained in a short time all the information Mme. Hesqueth gathered from her visitors. It is probable Mme. Bertha Trost provided the means of transmitting this valuable information to Berlin. When Lodi was caught it was learned that Mme. Trost had conveyed his reports to the German General Staff.

Among those who visited Mme. Hesqueth's shop quite frequently was the commander of a British regiment which had been incorporated into "Kitchener's army" for training previous to its assignment to the expedition in France.



"Each man drew from his tempt the young woman of his her head, the coins or the jewels were merry shriek, and to the great amusement of the company, leaped into the pool dryad, in the water until she had been joined by all her companions."

This colonel, whose name the British censors have never given to the public, had been a high officer of militia. He was one of the many country gentlemen who had seen service and retired, who were recalled for active service when England found itself in need of every expert service it could command.

The colonel was from the north of England. He had travelled much in Scotland and had estates in the north country. Mme. Hesqueth had never visited in the country. She was greatly interested in the historic districts which the colonel described to her. Her husband had often spoken, she said, of the Firth of Forth, where he had passed many leaves of absence.

The colonel saw nothing strange in Mme. Hesqueth's interest in Scotland. It did not occur to him not then, at any rate, that the Firth of Forth was one of the bases of the Grand Fleet, and that close at hand was the Tweed-Rosyth inlets, where mine laying flotillas were thought to be assembled. Mme. Hesqueth permitted his flirtation to become a serious thing for this infatuated colonel. It was he, not she, who proposed a trip together, incognito, through the Firth of Forth country. Mme. Hesqueth demurred at first; the colonel was impulsive in his pleading; at last she consented—hesitatingly.

Under assumed names the colonel and the pretty widow journeyed into Scotland; they visited Clyde and Cromarty and other points of fleet and submarine mobilization. At important places the colonel unveiled his incognito long enough to explain his presence in military zones. Mme. Hesqueth was an interested observer of the naval and military preparations going forward in the districts hidden away on the east and west coasts of Scotland.

Glasgow then was the headquarters of German agents engaged in attempting to turn discontent in Ireland to the purposes of Germany. It was here the unfortunate influences which brought disastrous results were organized to inflame the Sinn Fein. As early as 1912, the British Intelligence Bureau has since discovered, a headquarters for German spies in Great Britain was opened at Glasgow, with agents detailed from the Bureau of Special Foreign Service at No. 70

Königsplatzstrasse, Berlin, principal spies attached to it is interned in the United States, caught extending his activities.

At the conclusion of the board, where naval secretaries, but more or less of such high standing as Mme. Hesqueth, the companion established themselves of the former's leave at the gow. Later the Braid Ho dramatic raid by a company acting under special orders War Department. Many spies were gathered in by

While Mme. Storch and the arsenals and dock woman of wholly different Turkish slave girl was pit sources against that class which Mme. Storch was at the beautiful Millicent, for many years a ruling British aristocracy. The was one of the first to real honeycombed by secret ch for Germany. Knowing their possibilities, the danger to the empire in this class of spy. And, Scottish nobleman, with Scotland, she knew, more Scotland would be the fav for Germany's agents.

Acting upon her own organized among her household attaches of her estates in secret service. Her secretaries and other household relieved of their customary guidance of their mistress secret spy hunt, with her. Her most trusted women, the Duchess sent knew a spy headquarters residences of the Duchess.